

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH CELEBRATIONS

Connecting Communities and Cultures



19 October 2017

Zimbabwe Library Association President's Speech

It is with much pleasure that we once again meet as we celebrate the existence of school libraries as purveyors of information in the school system. It is, indeed, with much reason that we celebrate such a noble thought because we have this belief that school libraries are indeed of such value to the school system as is oxygen to the human body. School libraries play a pivotal role in providing the much needed and crucial dimension of information in its various content and context which opens the doors to for individuals to be enlightened.

The Zimbabwe Library Association has this firm assertion that every school should have a school library and a qualified librarian. We are so convinced that if that is the case, the pass rate within the schools will certainly improve and that such a situation goes a long at producing an informed citizen who can make a meaningful contribution to the development of the country. We believe that school libraries are dynamic entities incorporating the new technological dimensions of information. This has seen the move from just mere monotonous book- focused entities to the more exciting school library media centres where students can enjoy interactive learning with latest technological Information and Communication Technology gadgets. This year's international theme for the International School Libraries Month celebrations, "**Connecting Communities and Cultures**", resonates well with such dynamism.

The Zimbabwe Library Association fully supports such celebrations throughout the country and we encourage our branches to plan and implement such celebrations in their various constituencies. We applaud the International Association of School Librarians for such a noble recognition of the role played by school libraries.

This year's celebrations come at a time when the Ministry of Education has made tremendous inputs in their new curriculum to include school libraries as conduits in the

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learning platform. For the past two years the Zimbabwe Library Association has engaged itself with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in its attempts to seriously advocate for the recognition of school libraries and their role in improving students' performance in schools. The Minister, in 2014 was the Guest of Honour at our 49th Conference in Kariba, announced that school libraries will not only play an important role in providing needed learning resources in schools, but also impart the much needed Information Literacy Skills which will equip learners with the ability of identifying, selecting and using information for their development and the development of the country.

The celebrations here have meaning to us as one of our own, Mr Jerry Mathema is the International Association of School Librarians regional director responsible for Southern Africa region. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Mathema for the job he is doing to promote school libraries in our region we continue to assure him that, as ZimLA, we are prepared to work with him on any school libraries projects him may be engaged in. We believe that his presence in the international forum will promote the visibility of the school library sector in Zimbabwe.

We would like to thank all our partners who support us as we celebrate the month of the school librarian in Zimbabwe. May we continue working together as we promote the development of an informed citizen who can make meaningful contribution to the country.

May school libraries commit themselves to serving our communities!!!!

I thank you all.

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Zimbabwe Library Association President